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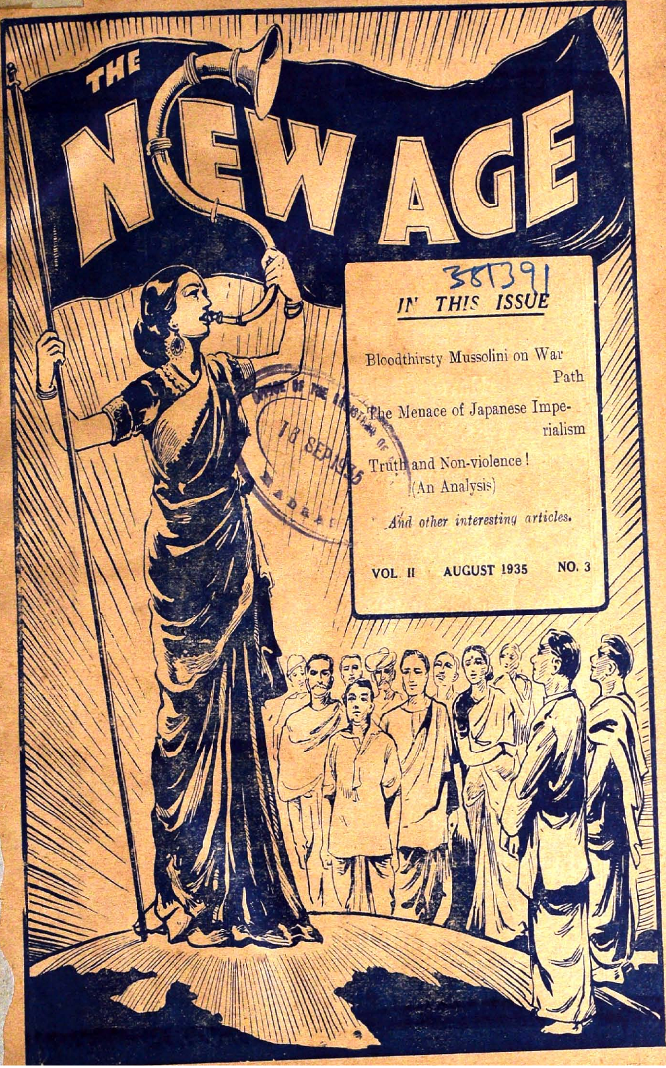

THE NEW AGE

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IN THIS ISSUE

- Bloodthirsty Mussolini on War Path
- The Menace of Japanese Imperialism
- Truth and Non-violence! (An Analysis)

And other interesting articles.

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The New Age

VOL. II AUGUST 1935 NO. 3

BLOODTHIRSTY MUSSOLINI ON WAR PATH

By **A. G. Venkatachary, B.A.**

> The last free country in Africa is threatened with political extinction.
>
> Mussolini has set out in his barbarous way to run down "the black scoundrels" and convert Abyssinia into an Italian protectorate.
>
> How do the European Powers react to the situation?
>
> What can be expected of the League Council?
>
> What is going to triumph?
>
> Honest statesmanship, or Terror?

Abyssinia—the "Ethiopia" of old—and the last independent state in Africa, has suddenly shot up into the limelight of world publicity thanks to the imminent fear of her political extinction.

Three times as large as Italy, rich in mineral wealth, with the most fertile soil and an excellent climate, she has for long been an inviting sample of war-causation. For many decades past, Great Britain, Italy and France, the three European powers with territorial interests on the African Continent, have been feverishly grabbing for "spheres of influence" in Abyssinia. Abyssinia, has so long been able to hold her own owing to the mutual jealousies of these European imperialists. But just now, various national and international complications have suddenly encouraged Mussolini to carve out for himself a slice of this spicy African cake. The historical events that have led up to this threatening conflagration can be briefly summarised as follows:

Clash of Imperial Interests

Italy, who was comparatively late to start on a venture of colonial expansion, found her chances effectively barred both in the East and the West. Naturally enough, her statesmen, in the early nineties of the last century, made efforts to obtain control over Abyssinia. 25,000 Italians who invaded the country in 1896 were utterly routed in the decisive battle of Adowa. Italy was forced into silence; but her statesmen have always been keeping alive the shame suffered in that defeat and one of the reasons of their present move is most certainly to avenge the Adowa debacle in the most decisive manner possible.

Adowa has been the precursor of European influence in Abyssinia. Great Britain, France and Italy, with highly prized colonial interests on the Continent, were naturally anxious to widen their influence, financially, politically and culturally. To avoid bitter recrimination amongst themselves, these three Powers had been negotiating for decades among themselves to demarcate and localise their respective 'spheres of influence' in Abyssinia.

The Tripartite Agreement

In 1906 a tripartite agreement was entered into which proposed for Italy two main concessions. Italy was to have a railway constructed connecting Eritrea (Italian East Africa) and Italian Somaliland which would pass through Abyssinia. Special economic privileges were to be afforded her in the west of Abyssinia which would include a limited use of the waters of Lake Tana, the most important source for the Blue Nile.

According to the Agreement, the respective interests of the three Powers which they were entitled to safeguard, were defined as follows:

> "The interests of Great Britain and Egypt in the Nile Basin, more especially as regards the regulation of the waters of that river and its tributaries (due consideration being paid to local interests) without prejudice to Italian interests mentioned in paragraph (*b*).
>
> (*b*) The interests of Italy in Ethiopia as regards Eritrea and Somaliland (including the Benadir) more especially with reference to the hinterland of her possessions and the territorial connection between them to the west of Addis Ababa."

It was also agreed that all railway construction to the west of Addis Ababa should be carried out under the direction of Great Britain, except for any railway "joining the Benadis to Eritrea to the west of Addis Ababa," which should be carried out under the directions of Italy.

Of course, a clause was also inserted guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Abyssinia.

But, Abyssinia had already agreed with Great Britain not to construct or allow any work across the Blue Nile, Lake Tana, or the Gobat which might affect the flow of water into the Nile without consulting her. Britain was a powerful neighbour with large vested interests already established. Hence, the proposals embodied in the Agreement did not get the approval of the Abyssinian Emperor.

But, Great Britain had in 1905 entered into a secret treaty with Italy assuring the latter that she would be remembered when it came to dividing the spoils.

Years rapidly passed by and British and French influences had been daily gathering strength.

France mostly owns and effectively controls the only railway connection with Abyssinia—the Addis Abbaba—Djibouthi Railway, connecting the Ethiopian capital with the French Port. France has a monopoly of Abyssinia's sea-borne trade, which is to her of immense economic, political and strategic advantages. Apart from the Railway, France has been able to secure

very valuable concessions within Abyssinia. In addition to a privileged position the French enjoy at the Abyssinian capital they have gold and platinum concessions on the rivers Baro and Bir Bir. A French syndicate also holds the tobacco monopoly for five million francs.

British Interests.

Interests held by Great Britain in Ethiopia are far more valuable from every point of view. Laka Tana in the northern highlands of Abyssinia, is the source for the Blue Nile which feeds Sudan and Egypt and hence Britain's greatest anxiety that her supreme interests over there should remain for ever unhampered. The British Government advanced a huge loan to Abyssinia about 1917. On April 6, 1929, the Abyssinian Government gave a concession to a British Company to build a railway line from Gambela on the river Baro on the Sudan border. Britain has various other commercial interests over there, including the execution of an intensive programme of road-building and the opening up of radio and telegraphic communication between Cairo and Addis Abbaba. But more than these and other material interests, is the grim necessity for Great Britain to hold her influence over Abyssinia inviolate on account of that country's most important strategic situation. India, the fulcrum of British Imperialist policy could only be kept in tact for exploitation by effective control of the Red Sea and the Suez Canal which, in turn, involve the undiluted control over Egypt (i.e. the Nile). Again, it is of paramount importance to Britain to concede no strategic right to any other imperialist Power, as it would mean, in the natural course of events, the breaking up of the British "Cape to Cairo" belt.

Italy's Grievances.

Thus, while Great Britain and France have been slowly carving out for themselves prestige, power and influence in Abyssinia, Italy had considerably lagged behind. Certainly, Italy could not brook this great advance of the two other parties to the Tripartite Agreement. She is indignant that her offers, to improve the communications and to create new opportunities of trade and colonisation in the interior, had evoked practically no response from the Ethiopian Emperor, who had, according to Italian Press been continuously partial towards Britain and France. But the Fascist Dictator, as soon as he came to power, was engrossed in stabilising himself and hence avoided picking any precipitous quarrel with either Great Britain or France, just then the two great triumphant Powers. Presumably he bided his time.

The 1925 Agreement.

But from 1919, Italy has been making efforts to secure the enjoyment of her allotted sphere of interest, if possible with the initial co-operation of Great Britain. Thenceforth she had been designing to get the support of Great Britain for the construction of a railway from Italian Somaliland to Eritrea, in return for her own support for British hydraulic interests on lake Tana and a motor road from Sudan to the lake. Britain, in view of the rapid rise to power of the Egyptian nationalists and their possible collaboration with Abyssinia designed particularly against Britain's paramount position in the Mid-East, readily consented. In 1925, accordingly an agreement was entered into by the two countries. These took the form of Notes exchanged by Robert Graham, the British ambassador at Rome and Sgr. Mussolini.

France, when this agreement was published, protested violently against such precluded dual agreements among the three Powers.

Abyssinia also protested to the league, denouncing the Agreement as contrary to the terms of the Covenant and the rights of League members.

Italy and Great Britain were forced

to bow and explain away the Agreement. Great Britain stated that "it was certainly not to be used for the purpose of coercing the Abyssinian Government" and that........" the Abyssinian Government had a perfect right to judge of what was in the best interests of Abyssinia."

The Italian Government said it was "simply an agreement as to procedure, with a view to co-ordinating certain economic interests of the two countries," and added that there was nothing "in the letter or the spirit of the Notes" justifying Abyssinian fears that the two Governments intended "to exert precipitate and forcible pressure on Abyssinia."

Abyssinia became silent after despatching a final Note to the League that "far from having given any undertaking whatever in this matter to the two Powers concerned," the Govt. retained "full and complete freedom to decide any requests which may be made to it, and has a perfect right to judge what is in the best interests Abyssinia."

After that nothing happened except the signing in 1928, of a treaty between Italy and Abyssinia of "durable peace and perpetual friendship."

Italy's Demands.

The Duce, who only in 1928 entered into an 'Agreement of Perpetual Friendship" is today determined either to reduce Ethiopia to the status of an Italian protectorate or in the alternative, secure for his country, enormous economic and political concessions which appear to be tantamount to the establishment of a protectorate.

Obviously, the Fascist Dictator, whose military bombasts have only been too familiar, had been openly and undisguisedly increasing the militarist strength of Italy all-round, all along awaiting an excuse to start a determined campaign against Abyssinia. The whirligigs of European politics are just now of immense psychological help to the Duce in carrying forward his imperialist designs.

The Ual-Ual Incident.

The long-awaited excuse presented itself in the shape of the Ual-Ual incident. It might be remembered that at the beginning of December last, there was a clash at Ualual—a station situated sixty miles on the Abyssinian side of the frontier between Abyssinia and Italian Somaliland. In this clash, it is stated, one hundred Ethiopians and sixty Italians were reported killed. What business the Italian soldiers had so for away from the border is perplexing. Presumably, they were soldiers in disguise surveying the recently discovered oil-fields in the vicinity of Ualual. Anyhow this incident was enough for Mussolini to have his fling. Abyssinia disclaimed all responsibility not only for this incident, but also to the supposed attack by Abyssinians at the end of November on the Italian Consulate in Gondar. But Mussolini protested violently against what he termed 'deliberate Abyssinian hostility.'

Out to 'Civilise'!

He emphasised that the Ualual and Gondar incidents had abundantly established the fact that the Abyssinian Emperor had no real authority over his subjects, especially the nomadic tribes inhabiting the eastern borders. So, he made it perfectly clear that it was the 'painful duty' of Italy to "civilise Abyssinia."

Without doubt Italy had already completed the psychological preparation of the Italian masses for a war on Abyssinia. The Italian Press had been impressing on them the need for "a crusade against the black scoundrels who dare to remain independent."

Mussolini at once demanded of Abyssinia an explanation for the incidents above-mentioned and also a strip of land about 800 kilometres wide between Italian Eritrea and Somaliland, in order to establish better links between

the two Colonies and thus consolidate the Italian Colonial Empire in East Africa. Without much ado, determined as he was to get what he wanted, and secure in the hope that Europe, situated as it is today, would place no formidable obstacles on his path, he began to send streams of troops, arms and ammunition to Eritrea and Italian Somaliland with a view to strike at the most opportune hour. Abyssinia, an original member of the League, protested to the League and appealed for its intervention. Mussolini protested against the action of Abyssinia in imploring the League to intervene, as in the first instance, the Italo—Abyssinian Treaty made it incumbent on the two countries to try to settle disputes between them by mutual negotiations. Britain and France, who obviously had intimate knowledge of the stubbornness of the Duce in this respect, twice successfully prevented the dispute from going up to the League Council at the first instance. (Why they were interested in this move will be explained in later paras.) In the meanwhile, Mussolini emboldened by the attitude of Great Britain and France, had made it clear that he would not rest content till he had secured for his country economic or territorial concessions in Abyssinia. So, the agreement arrived at Geneva on May 24, to give an opportunity to the disputants to settle the problem among themselves proved in practice of little value. The Duce was adamant and blockaded all chances for a reasonable settlement. So war-preparations went merrily on.

Italy and the League.

The sabre-rattling of Mussolini was originally considered to be mere stage-thunder intended to frighten the Abyssinian Emperor into giving Italy the concession demanded. But slowly it came to be realised that he was serious about the business. He summoned courage to tell the truth that his Italian designs were not for the satisfaction of the ridiculous frontier incidents, but to make Abyssinia virtually an Italian protectorate. He must certainly have been inspired by the impotency of the League to intervene successfully in the Sino-Japanese dispute which resulted in the eventual success of Japan, who by one stroke had strengthened her power and extended her sphere of influence in China. How the Chinese war-lords collapsed like nine pins before the recent demand of Japan to extend her sphere of influence in the provinces south of the Great wall, must have reacted on Europe's militarist champion to try the same experiment with Abyssinia. Further, all is not well with the Fascist regime at home. General Balbo, a close rival to the Duce, seems to be agitating for a coup d'etat against Il Duce himself, unless he is allowed to use the Abyssinian war as a lever to regain his political power. Possibly the Duce is afraid of any such eventuality, which might be aggravated by the alarming growth of unemployment in the country with its possible revolutionary turn. The ceaseless struggle of Fascism against bitter poverty has not been able to stem the rising tide of mass unemployment, which had grown very acute in the last few months, in consequence of the export collapse, the big increase in bankruptcies and business failures. The official publications, for very good reasons, do not publish figures pertaining to this aspect of life and editors have "to regulate their publications to the national emergency." The problem could only be solved by finding some profitable outlet for her surplus population. What other country is so inviting and so deserving of conquest from the Italian viewpoint as the obscure but highly productive Ethiopia? It is easy enough to make the post-war generation, educated in Fascist philosophy and militarist Imperialism, believe sincerely that the glories of *Pax Romana* might be revived through a campaign against Abyssinia. So, colourful posters flood every town and

village calling conscripts to the colours. Political differences are pushed back to obscurity by the nationwide preparation for the Ethiopian ouslaught. A general feeling is engineered that a war is better than unemployment. A Staff Captain in Rome is reported to have stated recently: "If we cannot give them bread, we can give them glory." If the Duce succeeds, at least to some extent, in his misadventure, an outlet could be arranged for Italy's surplus population. If, on the other hand, Italy sustains severe reverses, the problem of un-employment reduces itself to the extent of the number who would have become 'food for powder' in the course of the campaign.

The White Man's Burden.

Italy's designs on Abyssinia could very well be gathered from the following extract taken from the Italian monthly " Universale ". The article, it might be mentioned, was written closely following the Ualual incident. Bartolini says in the course of the article:

> " If the great powers put their hands on their hearts, they would understand that some countries and especially Italy, have the right to occupy now the empty African house: Abyssinia. As the Abyssinians have now attacked us, there is work, not only for the unemployed of to-day but also for others. It is madness to allow Abyssinia to be governed by intermediaries. Her government consists of rapacious foreign bankers ......The Abyssinian maize is splendid —we could have plenty. What do we lack in Italy? Coffee and cotton. Ivory, coffee and cotton are the principal products of Abyssinia. Here are the products which we must acquire. *If a people can reclaim their own country, it is their duty to reclaim other people's country.*"

What a hearty and philosophic explanation of the White Man's burden!

The Italian Press, in general, lends powerful support to the war, stating that eventually it might result in the obliteration of slavery in Abyssinia, besides opening up new fields for Italian venture.

How Great Britain and France and in fact, the League have reacted to Italy's venture is interesting study.

The Reaction of France

French foreign policy has been veering round for sometime past in the direction of strengthening her own frontiers, and for that, peace in Europe is absolutely indispensable. She has been a staunch supporter of the " Versailles " policy and has been opposing Italy's " revisionist " policy. The whole of last year has been a very anxious one for France. Italy and Germany had broken over the question of Austria whose independence, all the " Versailles " powers had guaranteed. With the fickleness characteristic of British Foreign Policy of late, France is afraid that unless she strengthens herself with powerful alliances, a Nazi attack on her was what they call a " dead cert ". Hence it was, she was exceedingly particular to enter into a Pact of Mutual Assistance with the U. S. S. R. despite the strong feelings of Britain against any such move. The Duce was understood to have had his own designs on Yugoslavia and this naturally gave no small anxiety to France. An agreement was therefore sought to be concluded providing for the immunity of Yugoslavia. These negotiations, all know, was delayed by the Marseilles attack on King Alexander. Eventually, prior to the Stresa Conference, Mussolini and Laval entered into the long-awaited agreement, according to which the price France agreed to pay for Italian support in Europe, was a *carte blanche* to Mussolini to gobble up part or all of Abyssinia, outside the railway zone. Italian interests were allowed to purchase shares in the Addis Abbaba-Djibouthi Railway.

The Stresa Front was seriously broken, when Britain, denouncing the naval clauses of the Versailles Treaty

entered into a naval agreement with Germany. France had all along been expecting some such "betrayal" on the part of Great Britain. Coming as it did in the midst of the Abyssinian tangle, it provoked bitter criticism from the French Press.

The "Echo de Paris" (Paris daily-Right wing) wrote:

> "......in view of England's betrayal of the League principle, there is no reason why France should, in future oppose Italy's ambitions in Abyssinia in the name of these League principles which are so grossly ignored by England when it suits her. It is more important than ever, that France should avoid a quarrel with Italy — a quarrel which would upset all France's diplomatic planning in Central Europe. The easiest way of regaining Italy's friendship is, therefore, to place no further obstacles in the way of her Abyssinian adventure."

That France was definitely arraigned on the side of Italy and would refuse to join Britain in any steps she might like to take against Italy, is a foregone conclusion.

British Attitude

The attitude of Great Britain towards this dispute does not seem to be clear and above board. There is no doubt that Britain has genuine pacifist intentions. She even concedes that Mussolini's aspirations have point in them and deserve of sympathetic consideration, but only she entirely disapproves of Italy's methods to secure for her concessions in Abyssinia. Sir Samuel Hoare gave copious assurances that Britain's sole desire in intervening in the dispute was to uphold the position of the League and to prevent any action being taken by Italy which may be in violation of its mandates. Mr. Baldwin reminded Mussolini that there is such a thing as public opinion in Europe. Mr. Eden, the popular British diplomat, pleaded at Geneva for civilisation and the rights of man. But Mussolini gave Britain some very hot stuff in return. He declared that British Imperialists cared little for public opinion when they had to build an empire and it does not lie in their mouth to blame Italian aspirations. The *Tevere*, a Rome daily said:

> "It suffices to open two or three history books to learn at what cost of villainy and cruelty the super-colonial empire of the fair English has been built; on what mountains of human bones rests the glory of British colonisers; of what nature is the red which dyes the Union Jack."

Signor Gayda, the mouthpiece of Mussolini and Editor of "*Giornale d' Italia*" has been publishing a series of accusations against Britain which have been officially described in London as baseless. War preparations in Kenya and British Somaliland, back-door support to Abyssinia and smuggling of arms into that country are only some of the serious allegations. Signor Gayda accuses Britain of having always done "as she pleased in the world, building up her vast and wealthy empire not only by daring enterprise but through a violent spirit of conquest with few scruples for the right of other nations whether civilised or uncivilised."

"The (British) Empire" he adds was built by means of guns and armed invasions, which often preceded Britain's bankers and sailors."

"Such tactics were used in obtaining vast African possessions.

"Now, through the League of Nations, she is interested in handicapping the movements of any other power.

"Italy is justly defending her flag which has been offended in repeated episodes of violence and bloodshed on the confines of her colonies. No nation worthy of the name dare halt the hand which moves for such a purpose."

British Efforts.

The strategical interests of Great Britain are so seriously involved in the Abyssinian conflict, that she has to kiss the foot that kicks, in her own interests. Britain's anxiety throughout, to avoid, if possible, public charges being brought against Italy, is attributed by some students of international affairs to British complicity in the Abyssinian designs. They point out that Britain's recent proposals to settle the dispute closely follow the action of the Labour Government in 1924, when, they ceded to Italy, Jubaland, formerly a part of Kenya, thereby enlarging Italian Somaliland. It is asserted that this territorial concession to Rome was a price to safeguard British interests in the event of an Italian occupation of Ethiopia. The rise of the Wafd Party in Egypt and their possible collaboration with Italy is also stated to be at the root of this specious bargain, the sole aim of which was the preservation in tact, at all costs, of her rights over Lake Tana. What Britain did in 1924 was sought to be repeated a few days back, when, Mr. Eden unsuccessfully tried to settle the quarrel with his compromise proposals. The British solution to the problem was her preparedness to offer to Abyssinia the port of Zeila in British Somaliland and a strip of territory all along the country up to the Abyssinian border, which would give her access to the sea. The offer was intended to facilitate Abyssinia making to Italy territorial and economic concessions as a result of any settlement that may be brought about between Italy and Abyssinia.

The Abyssinian Government lost no time in declaring that Eden's proposals were unethical and that Abyssinia was never consulted. Mussolini too, rejected the suggestion as a ridiculous ninny. He was out for larger conquests and could no , in any event, accept any proposal that might add to the strength and influence of any other European power in Abyssinia. He was shrewd enough not to miss the real purport of this extremely generous sacrifice of Britain. He knew it was the most effective bid for preparing Abyssinia to be Britain's permanent close-preserve.

"Should Italy accept this proposal, Abyssinia would remain contented and unpunished, and in fact encouraged, because she would bave been promoted to the rank of a collaborator with Great Britain," states Signor Gayda rejecting Mr. Eden's proposals. He further states: "With a new outlet to the sea, Abyssinia would enjoy a greater freedom than it now has in importing arms, as well as the privilege of becoming a naval power. Besides, Zeila in the hands of Abyssinia would represent an obvious economic profit to Great Britain. . . . . Zeila would mean a British profit-making proposition instead of an Italian one."

The offer drew forth vigorous protests from France. It required no great imagination to see that a railway or a motor road from Zeila to Addis-Abbaba would mean the virtual collapse of French influence. For, Djibouthi is close to Zeila and the proposed road or railway, would run parallel to the Djibouthi-Addis Abbaba Railway, and completely ruin French interests. Thus Britain's proposed 'sacrifice went unappreciated.

Efforts of the League.

When Abyssinia first appealed to the League for intervention, it might be remembered that France and Great Britain were the two countries who urged Abyssinia not to press her appeal to the League on the first occasion. But with the impossibility of Abyssinia and Italy carrying on negotiations in the tense militarist atmosphere, the League Council at last considered the question. A resolution was silently passed appointing the Italo-Abyssinian Arbitration committee, in which the Italian representative was supposed to concur. The resolution provided that the two delegates of Abyssinia and the two of

Italy named for this purpose shall try to settle this dispute by the process of arbitration. If they could not agree on a neutral chairman, the League would name one and if that did not suffice and the dispute remained unsettled on Aug. 25, the League Council would itself consider it. But, as was expected, the committee reported their failure to reach settlement by conciliation and the League Council has been summoned this week to settle this issue.

No sooner did the Arbitration Committee report than Signor Mussolini reiterated his pompous bombasts that the campaign would go on despite all odds against it. Mussolini's aim, at the outset, seems to be to encircle Abyssinia with his fighting planes and bombard cities and villages ; but it is stated, the Emperor could at any time summon a million men who would fight to a finish in the cause of their motherland. Further, Abyssinia being a mountainous region, the Italian forces must be prepared for very stern and determined resistance.

Ethiopia's Determination.

Unlike Mussolini, Haile Selassie has profound respect for the League. In an interview given to the "Sunday Chronicle" early this month, he is reported to have stated:

"I put my trust in the League of Nations. We have made no preparations: but if we are invaded, we shall fight. The pretexts for Italian mobilisation are non-existent. We look to the League to settle the trouble."

But, the Ethiopian Emperor is not unprepared to meet any precipitous situation. Should any foreign invasion be attempted while efforts to secure a peaceful settlement are in progress, Ethiopia, says the Emperor, will of course resisit. 'But' he adds, "if this settlement is long delayed, and if the increase of Italian armaments in the neighbouring colonies is thus facilitated, we shall be forced to prepare for the defence of our territory. While Ethiopia would appreciate aid from any source to maintain its inviolability, he has made it perfectly clear, that she would not sacrifice her political and economic independence.

The Ethiopian Emperor, unlike European statesmen, has been displaying the highest possible regard towards international treaties and Pacts. He appealed to the United States of America early this month to stand by the Kellogg Pact. America sent a reply to the Emperor, in effect, rejecting the appeal. She, however, informed the Italian Government that "America would view with extreme misgivings any Italian action towards Abyssinia leading to war."

The League Council is expected to meet on the 31st July. but there is a general opinion in Egypt and Sudan that war is inevitable. This impression gathers strength from the urgent steps now being taken by the foreign powers represented at Addis Abbaba to protect their diplomatic representatives, and if necessary, evacuate their nationals.

Japanese Indignation.

The Ethiopian Emperor continues to hope confidently about the decision of the League. He says : "Our cause is just and must prevail." But, he has made a categorical statement that he would refuse "any solution involving an Italian or other protectorate or mandate impairing the independence, sovereignty and freedom of our people."

The Japanese people and Government seem to be in opposite camps as far as this question is concerned. Mr. Sagimora the Japanese ambassador at Rome stated recently that Japan had no interest in Abyssinia. This statement has drawn out vigorous protests from the Japanese Press which demands his immediate recall. Mr. Hirota, Japan's foreign minister has assured the Italian consul at Tokio that Japan does not intend to take sides at present in the Italo-Ethiopian dispute.

But the people of Japan are vigorously canvassing support on behalf of Abyssinia. Placards stating "Japanese people stand up to help Abyssinia" have flooded the streets. Pamphlets are freely distributed that "the Japanese who belong to the so-called coloured race cannot allow Italian troops to invade Abyssinia."

It is not true to say that Japan has no interest in Abyssinia. She has just begun her penetration of the African market with Abyssinia as the centre of operation. Certainly, she could hardly be ungrateful to Emperor Haile Selassie, who has recently given Japan two million acres of land for the growth of cotton. Presumably, Mr. Hirota's qualified assurance "at present" denotes that Japan might fall in line with the League and does not wish to lay her cards on the table just now.

European countries, one after another have been busy banning exports of arms to Abyssinia, though such a right has been conceded to Abyssinia by a treaty of 1930. The Ethiopian Emperor complains that this action of the European powers renders more difficult the task of defending their soil against foreign aggression; but he has abundant faith in the signatories of the Kellogg Pact, who, he hopes would stand by it.

Mussolini and the League Council.

Mussolini thinks just the other way. In an interview to the "Echo de Paris" Sgr. Mussolini is reported to have stated on the 21st July: "All that I can say is that Italy is sure to impose her will. I am only thinking of serving my country like the great English men who built the British Empire in the past."

Thus, the solution of this problem is to-day entirely in the hands of the League. The shameless volte-face of Great Britain and other principal members of the League *apropos* the Lytton Report on Japanese aggression in China, has generally encouraged the strong impression that the law of Geneva easily adopts itself to the requirements of the greater powers who are themselves more or less "above the law." It might be that the dispute bristles with innumerable difficulties. But certainly no problem could be insuperable if only the bigger Powers in the League act fair-mindedly. Will the League invoke the Covenant and apply the sanctions if necessary? That is the crux of the problem. As the "Manchester Guardian" recently pointed out, "On the long view it is better that the League should keep its principles and lose its members than keep its members by betraying its principle. But if it remains unshakably united in doing the right thing it may yet keep both of them."

This extreme question has to be thrashed out by the League as the Abyssinian conflagration, if left unchecked, might very soon develop into a European and inevitably a world-wide holocaust the horrors of which could hardly be imagined.

What seriously agitates the minds of European statesmen is the question of questions: What will happen to the European 'balance of power' if Mussolini's army is engaged in Ethiopia? Will not Hitler embark on his campaign to annex Austria and involve the entire Europe in another catastrophe? This is no matter for prophecy. While Britain is anxious about her own interests in Africa she seems to be in a fix just at present. Sir Samuel Hoare in his comprehensive statement on the question denied the rumours that Britain asked France to join a blockade of Italy or that she was preparing for some isolated form of coercion against her. He said, "We intend to maintain the pledges given in the treaties and Covenant and are ready to work with Europe on the basis of collective security." Britain also seems to be determined not to allow Hitler to have his go at Austria.

In the meanwhile, Mussolini has

placed the League on the horns of a dilemma. If it tries to stop him, he has made it plain that he will walk out as Japan did. The official Italian Press asks point-blank: "What did Japan lose by walking out? In what respect did she suffer by ceasing to be a member of the League?" Italy has decided to send one of her representatives to the League Council; but has made it abundantly clear that she would not countenance discussion on any subject other than the Ualual and similar incidents. But Britain is anxious and is even prepared to demand a complete discussion of the entire question. It is not yet definitely known if France would back her up. If the League does nothing and leaves Abyssinia in the lurch as it did China, its prestige would get a fatal blow. It would be a moral wreck and a colossal sham.

Japan is tearing to tatters the effective sovereignty of the Chinese Republic. The state of moral paralysis which overtook the League soon after the publication of the Lytton Report has encouraged Japan to speed her territorial drive in China by the mere terror that her arms inspire. China is fast losing province after province, but has not even mentioned the matter to Geneva. She knows only too well, that so far as she was concerned the League had not acted in a manner worthy of its name and purpose. If the League fails again to protect as it is pledged to, the integrity and independence of its members, what the future holds in store defies imagination. It can be nothing short of the triumph of terror all the world over.

Let us yet hope that bold and honest statesmanship would triumph. The powers not directly involved in the dispute, have a paramount duty to discharge. They are the guardians of the world's future. A false step they take might easily put an end to civilisation. They must take courage and declare clearly and emphatically that if war breaks out, they will definitely range themselves actively against the side which was established as the aggressor. Such an emphatic and unequivocal declaration and preparedness to enforce it, would beyond doubt, make Mussolini think twice before plunging himself right into the vortex of the African fray. Will the member-states do their part?

Written on 29-7-35.

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Song of the Lower Classes.

We plow and sow, we'are so very, very low,
 That we delve in the dirty clay ;
Till we bless the plain with the Golden grain,
 And the vale with the fragrant hay,
Our place we know, we're so very, very low,
 'Tis down at the landlord's feet ;
We're not too low the grain to grow,
 But too low the bread to eat.

Down, down we go, we're so very, very low,
 To the hell of the deep-sunk mines ;
But we gather the proudest gems that glow,
 When the crown of the despot shines;
And when'er he lacks, upon our backs
 Fresh loads he deigns to lay ;
We're far too low to vote the tax,
 But not too low to pay.

We're low, we're low—we're very, very low,—
 And yet from our fingers glide
The silken floss and the robes that glow
 Round the limbs of the sons of pride ;
And what we get, and what we give,
 We know, and we know our share ;
We're not too low the cloth to weave,
 But too low the cloth to wear.

We're low, we're low, we're very, very low,
 And yet when the trumpets ring,
The thrust of a poor man's arm will go
 Through the heart of the proudest king.
We're low, we're low—mere rabble, we know,
 We're only the rank and the file ;
We're not too low to kill the fœ,
 But too low to share the spoil.

—*Earnest Jones.*

SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

182726
Chennai-600 008

By **V. Rangaswamy Iyengar.**

In the course of his address to the European Association at the Masonic Hall, Egmore (Madras) Mr. F. E. James —European representative in the Legislative Assembly, observed "that the politics of the future would have its origin in Economics and not in constitution-building." He further said that the emergence of a Socialist Party was a sign of this tendency.

Study of the after-war events, will show, that almost every country in Europe and America, is engaged, in the work of reconstruction which consists primarily in the reorganisation of its industrial system, and for its functioning changes are being brought about in the political constitution.

The New Deal, in the United states of America, aims at the reorganisation of the industrial system, and the American constitution is made to fit in to the New Deal. In Great Britain and France, a similar process is going on.

In fact the social order known as the Capitalist order has broken down. This social order, is the expression of economic liberalism as well as the political liberalism of the last century. The former is typified in the capitalist system and the latter in the Parliamentary form of Government. With the collapse of the industrial system, the Parliamentary form of Government has ceased to function.

The new social order which has emerged, is viewed either from Fascist or Socialist point of view.

A brief summary of the evolution of the capitalist order and the causes, for its break-down is given hereunder, as it is hoped, that it will enable the Indian National Congress to direct its activities dictated by the Time Spirit.

The capitalist order has been evolved out of forces, set free by the Industrial Revolution and the Franch Revolution. The main idea underlying the French Revolution was liberty. From liberty the Individualist school of thought was evolved, and this school found expression in economic as well as political liberalism.

The classical school of Economics founded by Adam Smith tended to develop individualism to the extreme limit possible. This school gave sanction for the pursuit of any business by individuals or group of individuals and to enjoy the full fruits therefrom. Individualism tended in turn to develop the doctrine of *Lassez Faire*, and profit became the prime motive for production. The result was that every business or every branch of business, was developed beyond the requirements of society. In other words goods and services, needed for actual consumption, were produced in enormous quantities. And yet the working of the industrial system made it impossible for the vast masses of population to consume these goods even for sheer existence.

The institution of Banking has contributed largely to the evils of the Capitalist system of industry.

The motive of profit gave rise to all sorts of enterprises which depended for their finance, on the banks. Inducement of high dividends or interests drew into these banks, people's money on an enormous scale. Prices rose and large profits were made. After a time compe-

tition entered into the field and the profits were cut. Factory after factory had to be closed, and this was followed by depression. Booms and slumps became the normal features of the system. Literature bearing on banking has revealed abuses of a gross kind. Very often banking corporations are said to have assisted industrial enterprises of a doubtful nature and played ducks and drakes with the people's money.

There is another, world factor that has made the Capitalist system what it is today. This is known as Imperialism. The creed of Imperialism is: The white race is a "*reservoir of stupendous energy.*" It needs adequate channels for its out-let and the tropical and semi-tropical channels serve as good channels. Imperialism is viewed both on psychological as well as economic, grounds, but both are interrelated with one another.

The domination by the white races over these regions, give infinite scope for its expenditure of white man's energy in diverse ways. Besides, it helps, to get supply of food stuffs and raw materials for factories and to secure assured markets for their goods. Imperialism, has affected masses, both in the East and the West.

In the East, it has dealt a death-blow to indigenous arts and industries and has deprived the masses of their very necessities and, made them fall a prey to famine and plague.

In the West, it finds expression in booms and slumps, unemployment overcrowding, panics and other phenomena, that go to kill the very life and soul of man.

It is again Imperialism, that has divided the white races into hostile groups. The late war arose out of the rivalries among these groups for the control of tropical regions. President Wilson participated in the late war with a view, to put a stop to the Imperialist pursuits which he found antagonistic to the welfare of humanity-white or coloured, and matured the idea of establishing an International organisation for the settlement of all questions affecting all nations, by peaceful means. But the treaty of Versailles, had been made an effective instrument for the pursuit of Imperialist ends. The Peace treaty "has created new states and they have become the satellites of the Great Powers. Their (smaller states) alliances even in their internal sustenance of their economic life, became not the expression of their own needs but of the will of their superior neighbours. If this tendency proceeds unchecked, we will have the world peopled perhaps by some half a dozen empires, each of which in seeking its safety will destroy the whole fabric of civilization." These are the words of Prof. Laski. However, he believes, that the forces at work, will lead towards the evolution of an International state which will not be "merely an association of sovereign states," but it will function as "super state with the power to bind the members."

The position of the world to-day is that Big Business and Militarism, control states and societies everywhere. Heroic efforts are being made to reorganise the capitalistic order.

The one problem that confronts humanity, white or coloured, is relating to its emancipation from the Capitalist Imperialism.

The masses in the west find salvation for them in a social order where the control of means of production will, gradually pass into the hands of the community at large which, will regulate national economy, production, marketing and consumption in their interests.

The two mass movements, Trade Union movement and the co-operative movement in Great Britain are organising their forces for, the establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth. In this order the industrial system will be controlled not by producer-capitalists

or workers but by consumers whose interests are identical with those of the workers,—hand workers and brain workers. In fact every worker is a consumer and every consumer is a worker.

The British Labor Party, has for its goal a socialist state and this will be effected without any catastrophic changes in the existing social order. This will involve primarily taking off the control of the means of production from the capitalist groups and vest the control in the hands of governments. The new social order is to be worked out through the industrial system, and necessary changes, for its successful working are contemplated in the political constitution.

The Indian National Congress will be advised to move on the lines of the British Labour Party. The Congress should envisage an industrial system based on the principle of a socialist commonwealth and should lay out schemes and programme for the same.

GOLDEN SAYINGS

The robber generally plundered the rich,the Governments generally plunder the poor and protect those rich who assist in their crimes. The robber doing his work risked his life, while the Governments risk nothing, but base their whole activity on lies and deception. The robber did not compel anyone to join his band, the Government generally enrol their soldiers by force.

—Leo Tolstoy.

* * *

Government is not reason, it is not eloquence—it is force! Like fire it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master; never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action.

—George Washington.

* * *

Society can overlook murder, adultery or swindling, it never forgives the preaching of a new gospel.

—Frederick Harrison.

* * *

The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.

—Thomas Jefferson.

* * *

All riches come from iniquity, and unless one has lost, another cannot gain. Hence that common opinion seems to me to be very true, "the rich man is unjust, or the heir an unjust one." Opulence is always the result of theft, if not committed by the actual possessor, then by his predecessor.

—St. Jerome

* * *

If you are a poor man now, Aemilianus, a poor man you will always be. Nowadays, riches are bestowed on no one but the rich.

—Martial

* * *

Small thieves lie in towers fastened to wooden blocks; big one strut about in gold and silver.

—Cato, the Censor.

* * *

What! you say a horse is noble because it is good in itself, and the same you say of a falcon or a pearl; but a man shall be called noble because his ancestors were so? Not with words, but with knives must one answer such a beastly notion.

—Dante Alighieri.

* * *

THE MENACE OF JAPANESE IMPERIALISM

By
K. Satyanarayana M. A.

During recent years Japan has entered upon a most daring adventure in the history of imperialist expansion. The future of Asia, and indeed of the whole world depends on the issue whether she may succeed or she may fail.

The great ambition of Japan is to bring under control and economic exploitation the whole territory which hitherto formed the Chinese Empire, that is, the whole of "China proper," Mongolia, Turkestan and Tibet.

Never before did any Power conceive of so vast and extensive a scheme, consciously prepared and carefully planned, for maintaining the *status quo* of a powerful Capitalism.

This new enterprise of Japan differs from all earlier ones, in that the earlier schemes of expansion always aimed at the conquest of regions to serve as markets for Japanese manufactured goods and producers of raw material, whereas the recent move aims at the expansion of Japan's finance-capital anxious for fields of investment.

The policy of expansion is not new to Japanese rulers. Beginning from the forcible occupation of Korea, Japan has been consistently following an aggressive policy of imperialist brigandage. Forty years ago she dealt a violent blow against the rapidly declining Manchu Empire. Thirty years ago she came out a victor in the Russo-Japanese war and triumphed over her other imperialist rivals by establishing her claim to the Northern provinces of China. Twenty years ago she made a serious attempt to bring the Peking Government under her own control. Ten years ago, being under the pressure of other powers, Japan made a temporary diplomatic retreat.

Now she again finds an opportunity for a big advance. Her Manchurian expedition proved a cent per cent success. It not only demonstrated that Japan's military strength in the North of China was more than sufficient, but also that the other powers would not create any trouble for her during her expeditions. The unexpected ease with which Japan subdued Manchuria, Jehol and Chahar, and the neutral attitude taken by the Powers even when Japanese troops passed the Great Wall and threatened Peking convinced the Japanese rulers that the North can at any time be brought under her tutelage.

The creation of the "Independent" State of Manchuko and the coronation in March 1934 of a puppet Emperor to that Province meant the consolidation of Japanese power in Manchuria. In addition to this, Japanese troops can use Manchuria as their base and swiftly move towards the south and occupy Peking, Shantung and the rich coal-fields of Shansi.

But the prospects of a Westward expansion across the Mongolian provinces to Sinkiang and Chinese Turkestan, using Manchuria as a military base, seem to be brighter than a southward movement. Although the territory situated in the west of China belongs to the National Government of China, the Government there is only a name. It is a rich territory with an enormous wealth of minerals and oil, to be developed by the help of Japan's finance-capital. Moreover, the frequent civil

wars in Mongolia and Sinkiang are proving a source of strength to the strong and powerful Japanese arms.

But the westward movement is not without danger. Japanese expansion into the interior of Central Asia may rouse the indignation of Soviet Russia, whose ærial strength cannot be surpassed by Japan's. Japan is anxious to avoid such a conflict at present. Great Britain also is sure to get irritable by the presence of Japanese invading armies at the very gates of Kashmere.

All these problems are carefully being studied at Tokio. The time and the shape of the next offensive depend upon the outcome of these deliberations.

Meanwhile Japan is busy in bringing under her tutelage all the provinces in the North. While engaged in this aggressive policy, her rival imperialist powers as well as representatives of big business in other countries attempted to help China with arms and ammunition. Then down came the government of Japan with the Monroe doctrine, and sent a note to all the Powers that they had no business to interfere in Japan's imperialist game over China which she termed as a "sacred mission" of civilising that country! It is only in June last that we have heard of Japan acquiring one more feudatory state, Chahan or Northern China, into its fold. The whole administrative machinery of that province has been replaced either by Japanese officials themselves or native officials friendly to Japan. The Peiping Political and Military Councils have been abolished, and now the virtual administrators of the Province are the officials who are under the direct supervision of Japan.

So much for the north. But the North is not the limit of Japanese ambition. The provinces of the Yang-tse valley are more tempting fields of exploitation. Here is a most populous and a most developed territory, worthy of attention of any powerful finance-capital.

But, here too, there is a delicate situation to be tackled by Japan. Many years ago, Great Britain signed a treaty with China claiming the Yang-tse valley as her future share of the loot and forbidding the Chinese government to cede any territory in the region to any power. Although Great Britain has no idea of establishing political suzerainty over the Yang-tse valley, she has at present vast financial interests there. So also has the United States of America. Here, a direct aggression of Japan is sure to call forth a strong and united opposition from the western powers. As long as Japan was active in subduing the Northern provinces of China, these powers did not put forth any considerable opposition. But the moment Japanese armies appeared to threaten Shanghai, the British and American powers got alarmed and vigorously offered a united front in forcing back the Japanese armies from the Yang-tse valley.

A second difficulty lies in the fact that the Southern provinces are less liable to civil wars. There is a solid nucleus of resistence here which imperils any Japanese invasion.

Under these circumstances the military occupation of Yang-tse is sure to fail. A new form of attack has to be discovered. A new war-technique has to be introduced. The new policy pursued by the Japanese imperialists is to abandon the idea of a military occupation of the South, but to bring the Chinese government itself under their control, so that Yang-tse may remain under the Chinese govarnment but still useful for the imperialist robbers. This policy is being worked with remarkable and rapid success during recent years.

Japanese Imperialism has taken up enthusiastically all the opportunities favourable for pro-Japanese moves in China. The internal dissensions and

personal jealousies within the Chinese Nationalist Government are manifold. The Chinese Nationalist sentiment has been deeply wounded by the betrayal of the League of Nations and the powerful western Powers. The class-conscious peasantry of China have established the soviet form of Government within the Chinese territory, which is a constant fear to the National Government. All these circumstances have proved to be very favourable for Japanese influence in China. She began to support one rival group of war lords against another. She roused the national sentiment of the Chinese population against the greedy and powerful nations of the west. She promised active support, and even actually supported the attempts at the overthrow of the soviet territory in China which embraced as many as 90 million people.

The result has been a quick reshuffling of The National Government. All Anti-Japanese elements have been removed from the Nanking Government and a close understanding between Chiang Kaishek and the Tokyo Government has been established.

The Fukein revolt is the result of the resentment of the Anti-Japanese sections of the population against this imperialist menace. But the revolt was easily crushed because the Government troops had the advantage of Japanese help in munitions as well as leadership.

Now, the prospect of a complete success of Japanese Imperialism for establishing its supreme overlordship on China and her natural resources depends upon the issue whether the National Government will be able, with the assistance of Japanese Imperialists, to completely overthrow the power of Soviet China. If the National Government can do this, it means a complete subservience of Chiang Kai-shek to the rule of Tokyo. And the rule of Nanking will be, in effect, the rule of Tokyo, because a controlled Chinese nationalism can easily be utilised as a fighting force against the powerful European and American finance-capital. Japanese capital can permanently sit upon the soil of China and suck the blood of the Chinese masses, having illimitable resources of raw material and cheap labour at its command.

But, before this deep ambition of hers is fulfilled, a number of catastrophic changes are inevitable. We can expect a terrible conflict between Japan and Soviet Russia. A war with the United States or with Great Britain is probable. The Chinese masses may recoil against native capitalism and foreign imperialism simultaneously. Or, the working class and the Military in Japan may be reduced to utter poverty and a forcible insurrection against the Japanese Government can be expected.

The New Age will infuse New Spirit.

TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE

AN ANALYSIS OF GANDHIJI'S CREED

Mr. Manohar Malaviya writes in the People as follows:—

In his letter written on the 17th of September from Wardha regarding his proposed retirement Gandhiji placed before Congressmen in the country certain amendments to the Congress constitution. Only on the acceptance *in toto* of these amendments was he prepared to continue to be at the leadership of the Congress. One of the amendments was as follows: "The first amendment I would propose is to replace the words 'legitimate and peaceful' by 'truthful and non-violent.'

The Bombay Congress left the consideration of this amendment to the various Provincial Congress Committees. Fortunately, or unfortunately, many of the Provincial Congress Committees or provincial conferences which express the opinions of the provinces as distinguished from that at the centre, voiced forth their sentiments against this amendment of Gandhiji. And consequently the consideration of it was postponed by the Working Committee to the next session of the National Congress to be held at Lucknow.

As to Gandhiji's motive in insisting upon the replacement of the words "peaceful and legitimate" by "truthful and non-violent," much has been said in the press. To remove any possible misunderstandings that may still be lurking in their minds Babu Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Congress and the erstwhile lieutenant of the Mahatma, took upon himself the task of making it plain. In his speech at Jalgaon he is reported to have made the following statement—consciously or unconsciously: "India is so full of different religious creeds and cultures that unless our programme is based on the cardinal principles, truth and non-violence, we will have to face civil war at every turn in the country thereby enabling the present Government to tighten its hold on us."

This statement is not without its special significance, especially at a time when poverty is increasing and the attention of the whole country is drawn towards the future constitution of the Indian Government. One is naturally led to ask the true implication of this "truth and nonviolence," that the Gandhist leadership is trying to force upon the country.

Despite the fact that the National Congress has not given its assent to the change in the Article I of the Congress creed the leadership of the Congress has been slowly foisting it on the unwary Congressmen. This turn was manifested in the Independence resolution that was passed on the Independence Day in January. Though this resolution was *ultra-vires* in the sense that the resolution meant the change in the creed of the Congress, the Congress President, with the consent of the Working Committee members, had the audacity to foist on the country.

Gandhiji tried to force it upon the country not without any reason. His activities throughout his career have a bearing upon this one fundamental problem. The National Struggle has

taken an altogether different trend. The old way of collaboration with both the exploiting and the exploited classes is meeting with its natural death. A process of class differentiation is going on inside the nationalist movement for freedom. This is evidenced by the growth of the Congress Socialist Party with its programme based on day-to-day struggle for existence culminating in the intensification of the struggle for freedom thus paving the way for a radical transformation of the existing social order. The present Gandhist leadership of the Congress cannot envisage a stage of anti-Imperialist struggle through class-struggle, much less the distant period of the abolition of private property being tied down to the chariot of feudal landownership and capitalist reaction. They are so opposed to this new programme that they have taken a definite stand to fight this evil of the programme of the mass struggle for Independence.

The feudalistic reactionary ideology of Gandhism wedded to the decadent capitalistic system is demanding a process of class-collaboration in society to keep the existing system of exploitation intact. This is well exemplified in Gandhiji's message to Ahmedabad Millworkers during the strike. This again accounts for the fact that the Mahatma has been persistently trying to sabotage the real trade union activities of the workers by forbidding the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Union from affiliating to the All India Trade Union Congress.

It is not the civil war between the various religions and communities in India that the present leadership of the Congress is concerned with. As everybody else, they know that the Hindu-Muslim problem is only a superficial thing born of the present foreign domination. They know equally well that if you scratch the surface a bit you will find that the interests of the various sections of the masses are identical and that there exists no Communal problem underneath. It is a problem wholly economic and nothing more nor nothing less than that.

If the consciousness of the masses is developed along these economic lines, the struggle between the exploited and the too small members of the exploiting class will grow rather to a dangerous extent, thereby handicapping the sacred rights of the capitalist class. This they are afraid and consequently to sabotage any move towards such a programme of class-conscious struggles the present move of the Congress leadership to side-track the whole national movement is directed.

The present leadership of the Congress is very much afraid of the rising tide of the left-wing opposition. They have been trying to crush it by methods of sabotage and otherwise. Some openly declared themselves against it while those like Rajendra Babu are taking a covert stand. The whole of Gandhian philosophy is lending a strong hand of support in this process of sabotaging of the rising forces and this is the *summum bonum* of the new amendment of Gandhiji in the Congress constitution.

Q.—How to end unemployment?

A.—By providing the unemployed as fodder to the Cannon as Mussolini contemplates.

RUSSIA AND THE CAPITALIST WORLD

Under the above caption Edgar S. Furniss discusses in the "Current History" the significance of Soviet Russia's various agreements with Capitalist States which were entered into recently. He writes:

"By signing a pact of mutual assistance with France on May 2, the Soviet Union gave its foreign policy a new twist. To conclude with a Capitalist State a pact that is so much like an old-style military alliance represents a complete reversal of the original Bolshevist foreign policy as derived from the tenets of Communism.

"Hardly less interesting is the Soviet-German credit arrangement concluded on April 9. It indicates the determination of the Soviet rulers not to let embittered political relations interfere with economics. It illustrates, too, the advantages accruing in the present state of world commerce to those nations which administer their foreign trade as a government monopoly. For American observers it has additional significance in that the Soviet Union has by this action transferred to Germany many large purchases which had been intended for the United States.

"The agreement provides a five-year credit of 200,000,000 Marks for Soviet purchases of German goods. Each nation binds itself to import goods from the other in amounts at least equal to a minimum value fixed by the agreement. . . . These details of agreement, made possible by the foreign trade monopolies of the two countries, assure the Soviet Union the means of payment in goods for her German purchases while guaranteeing Germany a favourable balance of trade with the Union. Soviet purchases will consist mainly of railroad equipment which would have been obtained in the United States had not the failure to reach a settlement of the debt question postponed indefinitely the extension of credits by American banks. . . .

"Of chief importance, however, is the preferred position given to Germany in connection with the far-reaching programme of Soviet railroad rehabilitation. At present transport facilities form the weakest part of Russia's military establishment. A vast programme of rebuilding, extension and modernisation has been laid out by the Soviet Government to overcome this weakness, and the nation that takes the initiative in colloborating in the enterprise may well expect to develop a very profitable business.

"The sale of the Chinese Eastern railroad together with the other developments in the Far East has appreciably reduced the tension of Soviet-Japanese relations. . . . In the course of two years of conference both parties were persuaded to make a series of concessions that did much to reconcile their opposing views regarding their respective interests in Asia. . . .

"The formidable military preparations of the Soviet Union in the Far East can be regarded as a source of danger only on the supposition that Japan intends to be the aggressor, for these forces are obviously for defensive purposes. Now that Soviet interests in Manchukuo are extinguished, nothing that Japan does within that territory is likely to be a cause of war. The Union has made it clear, too, that the Eastern army will not be used to defend China from Japanese aggression. Outer Mongolia remains a possible area of

conflict because of the uncertainty whether Russian interests there are so clearly established that Japanese expansion in that direction would constitute an infraction of Soviet territorial integrity.

"In general, however, the only real menace to peace is the danger of invasion of strictly Soviet territory, particularly the Maritime Provinces. This is the logic of the Soviet position that a non-aggression agreement rather than demilitarization is the first essential of security. At the moment the two governments are deadlocked over the priority of these two pacific measures. The Soviet military establishment in the Far East, according to unofficial despatches, has actually been reduced as a consequence of the diminished tension resulting from the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railroad. The Russians, nevertheless, officially refuse to retreat on the question of demilitarization. . . . "

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE MACHINE

By

C. Jagannadham

A school of thought is widely prevalent in the world to-day, and gradually gaining ground in India, namely the 'Back to the land' and the 'No machine' theory. This theory is advanced as a panacea for unemployment.

How far is the theory correct? A keen student of economic science and world politics shall unhesitatingly answer that it can never solve the problem of unemployment.

But then the layman curiously questions 'What! Politicians like Great Gandhi, Rajen Babu and economists like Kumarappa suggest the same solution and and you dare reject it! Of course, it is no wonder that shilly-shally economists and politicians have hopelessly bungled the matter.

Truly, nothing is easier for anyone to convince the ignorant peasant or worker that machine is the cause of his impoverishment. For one can exclaim to him 'you see, new machines came and numbers of workmen are thrown into the streets. Look here, how machine products compete with hand-made goods? Ah! the rascally machine deserves to be destroyed!

But surely a class-conscious worker will retort, "My good Sir, What is it due to that we are being exploited? Is it not because the machine, just as the land, is in the hands of the exploiting few? Why don't you agitate for the common ownership of those means of production instead of individual private ownership as it is at present?' He will further remark "Were there no famine, no disease, no impoverishment before the machine came? As a matter of fact, is it not out of sheer necessity, namely exploitation on a greater scale, by a new method, that the machine was introduced into the process of production, when the former method of exploitation under feudal conditions became a fetter upon the extant forces of production?"

But unfortunately for the exploited majority of mankind and fortunately for the few exploiters of wealth, the workers in the towns or villages have not yet become class-

conscious enough to boldly question the efficacy of such shallow panaceas.

One of the most relevant points raised by the apologist of the 'Back to the Land campaign,' is the 'slum' question of the highly industrially advanced countries of the west. Quite true, but look at Russia without slums, but full of machines. What is more, are there no 'slums' in our villages? Are not whole families of farm-labourers pledged to labour under their masters for their whole lifetime, almost for nothing? How horrible is the confiscation of lands of the poor peasantry by the rich money-lenders who charge exorbitant rates of interest? Is their diet nourishing? Are their houses in order?

Why do these people not raise the question of agricultural exploitation, while strongly condemning the 'slums,' the outcome of industrial exploitation? Whose interest are they really serving? They no doubt indulge in lengthy verbiage in order to bring home to the public that they really serve the cause of workers and peasants? But if one should put their theories and solutions to the test, it is crystal clear that their propaganda is for the exploiters as against the exploited.

How this is will be presently shown. Any student of Indian economics easily understands that land in India is already overburdened, agriculture does not yield enough remuneration and hence numbers migrate into towns from villages. Really, then, there is no point in saying 'Back to the land.'

Then comes the question of handicrafts, the pet and chum of the V.I.A. economists or politicians or what you will. Now, can handicraft product compete with machine-made ones, even if you 'decentralise' or localise the small-scale industry? The Khaddar-business story is eloquent of a negative reply.

But, then, what about the main point, namely exploitation of the many by the few? Can village industries solve it? Perhaps the reply may be 'temporary mitigation to some extent.' There, then, is the crux of the problem. They are not for *solving* the problem of unemployment, the outcome of exploitation of the many by the few. But they try to mislead the workers that they may succumb to a system of exploitation conducted under more predatory and historically defunct forms of production, instead of embracing the city slums.

What more substantial proof is needed to prove the fallacy of the great protagonist of the Village Industries, than the statement which he gave to a representative deputation of U. P. Zamindars! Did he not clearly point out that he was against the confiscation of Zamindars' lands and that he would lay down his life to protect their *legal rights*? But only they should treat poor peasants benevolently!

And now, what doubt is there that V. I. A. programme is only a make-shift.

After all, the present V. I. A. programme will further strengthen British Imperialism in India. For it is in the interest of the British bourgeois exploiter class that the country must be agricultural to become a field for colonial exploitation?

Finally may I point out to my reader the example of Russia, which is the Land without Unemployment, with the machine in the process of production in that country.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Madras Political Conference.

We are having throughout the Presidency Conferences, District, Taluk, Village, and so on and the provincial Congress Leaders are singing the ballads of their own past achievements and the sacrifices of the Congress in the freedom struggle. One would naturally expect that in such gatherings, though due to the changed circumstances in the country, resolutions exhorting the country to resort to direct actions to win the complete freedom of the country may not be passed, the leaders would keep up the prestige and the anti-Imperialist conception of the Congress institution; but unfortunately these Conferences are used and exploited for the purpose of lowering the very ideal of the institution by passing resolutions of a complete reactionary type. Mass propaganda in favour of complete Independence, economic reconstruction, and ushering of a new social order is totally absent in such conferences. In the speeches delivered in all these conferences, we may search with the most powerful torchlight to find out a speck of hope and deliverance in vain. The country is led from the progressive political dynamism to that of reformist surrender and practical inaction.

The Madras Political Conference was no exception to this rule. Mr. C. R. Reddy, one of the intellectual sympathisers of the Congress when it was an outlaw is now an active exponent of its reformist ideals and he happened to guide the destinies of the Madras Conference. In his presidential address, he waxed eloquent about the Congress achievements and had rightly a fling at the other degenerate political party of South India, the Justice Party. His address gives a delightful reading, but if it is expected to give a lead for a fight against Imperialism, one will be disillusioned. He talks of practical statesmanship and according to him acceptance of office will constitute National advancement! He never worried for a moment the limitations of power given under the constitutions to a minister and if the Congress accepts office, it can only work as agents of Imperialism and not as independent party government as in the case of any free country. But he is supremely satisfied with the paltry help, he fondly hopes to render to the common man while in power and his slogan is to keep out worse men in order to put in bad men! This in short is his philosophy when he defended the principle of acceptance of office while admitting that there are many bad men in his own camp. He wants a chance and he wants it in the name of the Congress! A resolution therefore has been passed in the Conference recommending to the Congress for the acceptance of office. Where is the rejection of the White Paper and the Congress programme of summoning a Constituent Assembly? A *volte face* in politics is common enough, but a downright betrayal is generally unthinkable. The Madras Political Conference instead of being a historcial event of a high magnitude will go down in history as a gathering of reformist elements who cannot look beyond their nose and are supremely satisfied with the surrender they have called upon the Congress to perform in the name of the country.

The Working Committee.

The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha to discuss certain important problems facing the country today, but as usual, they shirked the

responsibility and put off the evil day. It is clear from the trend of events that the Congress will have to take a stand definitely either on the side of fighting elements or go the whole way with the reformists in the Congress who are out to destroy its prestige and influence by committing it to a course of absolute surrender and subservience to Imperialism. The reactionary bombasts of Satyamurthi, the liberal trend of Bulabhai and the dictates of retired politicians of the type of Dr. Ansari and various other forces are day by day forcing the Congress to decide in favour of the acceptance of the reforms and working them. The leftwing of the Congress, being not represented in the Working Committee and being without an outstanding leadership in the Congress itself can not make its demand of rejection of the reforms effective. The Congress instead of adhering to its own programme of rejection of the constitution and summoning of a Constituent Assembly has taken the counsels of the moderate elements in the Congress who seem to gather strength in order to make use of the constitution for their petty class interests. They put up a tough fight in order to give up the fight against foreign rule and exploitation. Acceptance of the reforms or rather rejection of the reforms and acceptance of office in order to use the position of power for national benefit (a political camouflage) are highly detrimental in the struggle for national emancipation and the influence and prestige of the Congress as a fighting institution will be at an end. If the Congress wishes to take up such a catastrophic stand let it by all means do so. But we believe true and genuine patriotic instincts will prevail and the Working Committee will once for all decide against any such course and will truly reflect the desire of the mass of our countrymen to reject the reforms and intensify the struggle for freedom forthwith.

The Anti-War Day

On the first of August throughout the world, masses of workers and peasants celebrated the Anti-War day. War is threatening the world today and all capitalistic countries are anxious to precipitate war. The Japs have their eyes on China and other Asiatic regions and by their offensive they have already monopolised and swallowed a major portion of the northern Chinese territories. It has been the turn of Mussolini now who is out to civilize the coloured races of Abyssinia. He wants to expand Roman Imperialism and his recent utterances and actions show how he wants to throwthe world into the vortex of war. Nazi Germany is looking covetously at Central Europe and other lost colonies and the atmosphere is surcharged with violence and war. It is but natural that the peace-loving masses who refuse to be pawns in the hands of these Imperialist blood-suckers should revolt against war and its horrors and we confidently hope that their attempts to prevent war will bear full fruits. Inspite of their anti-war movements, if war breaks out, we believe that these organisations which have great mass following will refuse to co-operate with war-mongers and will fully exploit the situation to their own benefit by establishing a classless society based on equality and fraternity and eliminating exploitation, the primary cause for all Imperialist wars.

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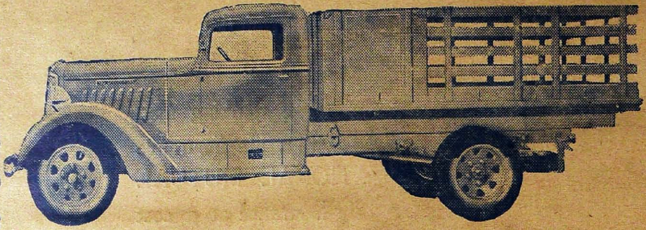

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Printed by V. Krishnaswami Iyengar, at the B. N. PRESS, Mount Road, and
Published by D. V. NATHAN, at 3, Kondi Chetty Street, Madras.